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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/069,671	02/22/2002	Nathan D Ames	22188/06465	3624

7590 03/31/2003

Calfee Halter & Griswold
Suite 1400
800 Superior Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114-2688

EXAMINER

ELVE, MARIA ALEXANDRA

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1725

DATE MAILED: 03/31/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/069,671	Applicant(s) Ames et al.
	Examiner M. Alexandra Elve	Art Unit 1725

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1 - 43 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1 - 43 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 3 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

Claim 27 is objected to because of the following informalities: it is not known what a filler material 25.10.4L is. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Paskell (US Pat. 5,804,792) in view of Hummel (US Pat. 5,711,474) and Barefoot (US Pat. 5,864,111).

Paskell discloses a flux for gas tungsten arc welding of stainless steels. The flux may contain TiO or TiO₂ or Cr₂O₃ or SiO₂. The flux increases the penetration of the weld, decreases the bead width and increases the weld cross sectional area. Further, a method of joining stainless steel components using a thin layer of flux over the joint. Approximate weld parameters are 150A welding current, 9V welding voltage, about 3 inches per minute welding torch travel speed and a shielding gas of argon flowing at

about 25 to 30 cubic feet per hour. Paskell does not teach the joining of tubular products, welding of duplex stainless steel or the use of orbital welding.

Hummel discloses a method for welding two tubular members together in butting relationships. A purge gas is delivered to the welding zone. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that welding of stainless steel products as described by Paskell would encompass stainless steel tubular members as taught by Hummel.

Barefoot discloses orbital welding of pipe materials. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use orbital welding, as taught by Barefoot, in the Paskell system because this is merely one type of welding method.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See US PTO-892.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to M. Alexandra Elve whose telephone number is (703)

308-0092. The examiner can normally be reached Monday to Friday from 6:30 am to 3:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor Tom Dunn, can be reached at (703) 308-3318.

Any inquiry of general nature to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.



M. ALEXANDRA ELVE
PRIMARY EXAMINER

March 27, 2003.